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A NEW

TEST

OF THE

CHURCH

OF

ENGLANDS

LOYALTY.

With allowance.

L O N D O N,

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OF THE

CHURCH

OF

ENGLAND

ROYALTY

THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME

A New TEST of the CHURCH of ENGLANDS LOYALTY.

I Have often consider'd, but could never yet find a convincing reason, why that part of the Nation, (which is commonly called the *Church of England*) should dare appropriate to themselves alone the Principles of true Loyalty, and that no other *Church* or *Communion* on Earth can be consistent with *Monarchy*, or indeed with any Government.

This is a Presumption of so high a nature, that it renders the *Church of England* a despicable Enemy to the rest of Man-kind: For what can be more ridiculous than to say, that a Congregation of People calling themselves a *Church*, which cannot pretend to an *Infallibility* even in matters of Faith, having since their first Institution, made several Fundamental changes of Religious Worship, should, however assume to themselves an *In-errability* in point of Civil Obedience to the Temporal Magistrate? Or what can be more injurious, than to aver, that no other *Seet* or *Community* on Earth from the rising to the setting Sun, can be capable of this singular Gift of *Loyalty*? So that the *Church of England* alone (if you have Faith enough to believe her own Testimony) is that Beautiful Spouse of Christ, Holy in her *Doctrine*, and *Infallible* in her Duty to the Supream Magistrate, whom (by a Revelation peculiar to her self,) she owns both for her Temporal and Spiritual Head. But I doubt much whether her *ipsa dixit* alone will pass currant with all the Nations of the Universe, without making further search into the veracity of this bold Assertion.

We will allow them, however (and that's the only thing in my opinion, they can value themselves upon,) that most of the Members of this *Communion* have been Faithful and Serviceable to King *Charles I.* during the unhappy Commotions in His Reign: But they must allow Us on the other hand, that it was the Ambition of that *Church* to force an Universal Uniformity

to her *Liturgy* and *Discipline*, occasion'd that War; and the good King lost both his Life and Crown in the Attempt. And I pray what work of Super-erogation is it in them, not to have joyn'd with the *Common Enemy* to cut their own Throats? Or to have done that which the Law of Nature dictates to every individual in his own defence? The case of the *Romanists* in those days was quite different from theirs, for they freely expos'd their Lives and Fortunes in the Kings Service, without any regard or prospect of self-Interest: For whether His Majesty lost or won, they expected no Benefit by the change. They were to hope for no Quarter from the Rebels (for it was never known that any of their Communion serv'd that Party); & on the other side the King Himself seem'd to disown them in all Treaties with the *Parliament*, and Banish'd them at last both from His *Court* and *Army*, to comply with the importunities of His own *Protestant Party*, who would needs have it so. It is much doubted whether those of the *Church of England*, had they met with Recompenses of this kind; would have been half so forward to serve a Prince, who, instead of cherishing and rewarding, should reject and Banish them; tho' they take never so much pains now to perswade the World, that *Loyalty* is of the Essence of their Religion. Let us but examine the carriage and behaviour of this *Church*, both in her Infancy, and now in her Old Age, and we shall easily perceive the vast difference between the *Loyalty* of her Members to *Catholick Princes*, and the Fidelity of *Catholicks* to *Protestant Kings*.

She began her Infancy under *Edward VI.* an Infant King, when that Famous *Confession of Faith* was compil'd in 39 *Articles*. No sooner was *Edward* call'd away, but she endeavour'd with all her Might and Power to set up a Brat of her own to possess the Crown, and to Exclude *Queen Mary* the only Legitimate Child of *Henry VIII.* because she was a *Catholick*. After *Queen Mary's* Death, *Elizabeth*, a known Bastard, rais'd this *Prelatick Protestantism* call'd the *Church of England*, as a Prop to support the weakness of her Title: And they, no sooner found themselves re-establish'd, then they Enacted these bloody *Canibal*

bal Laws (a sufficient Testimony of their Moderation and Tenderness) to Hang, Draw and Quarter the Rebels of the Living God, from whom they themselves pretend to derive their immediate Succession: Laws that have been, and are to this day, abhorr'd and exclaim'd against by all the Reform'd Churches of Christendom. Imprisonment, Banishment, and Confiscation of Goods, were the moderate Church of Englands Laws in favour of the *Lazity*, but severely Executed in those days. And to Crown the extraordinary Loyalty of the Members of this Church, they barbarously Murder'd the undoubted Queen of Scotland, the Queen Dowager of France, and the Lawful Heir of the Crown of England, inhumanely denying her a Priest of her own Communion to assist her in the Agony of Death.

The greatest Zealots of the Church of England will not I hope have the confidence to alledge that this execrable Fact, and the first of the kind, was contriv'd and executed by *Presbyterians*, *Independants* or *Anabaptists*: Our Records and Histories clearly make out, that the Members of That Church were the only Men who then voted in *Parliament*, who sat in *Council*, who were the *Commissioners* delegated to Try and Condemn Mary Queen of Scots, and the Lawful Queen of England, whom they beheaded on a publick Scaffold, to the Scandal and Repoach of *Christianity*: And this done without the least Remorse or Repentance, no *Prelate*, *Peer*, *Judge*, or *Senator* of that Communion having ever yet declar'd his resentment against this barbarous Act. Behold here an incomparable sort of Loyalty, to set up the Title of a Bastard, and to Murder the Legitimate Heir. And some have affirm'd in Print that K. Charles I. came to the same Tragical end, for being too Zealously Devoted to a Church, which prov'd so Cruel and Treacherous to His Grand-mother; and gave the first precedent of cutting off a Crown'd Head by the hands of a Hang-man.

If therefore assisting Usurpers to invade the Crown, if Condemning and Executing the Lawful Prince, if Persecuting their fellow Subjects with Death and Confiscation of Goods; and if standing out in opposition to their Sovereign, when he is of another Religion; if these I say, be sufficient Testimonies of Loyalty, we must
own

own the *Church of England* to have been hitherto unparallel'd in her Duty. But if this be not the true *Test* of Loyal Subjects, I doubt our Rock of *Loyalty*, will soon degenerate into a Rock of Scandal, of Disobedience and Rebellion : whereof we need no further Evidence than her present behaviour now in her Old Age, towards our Gracious Sovereign King JAMES II.

His Sacred Majesty no sooner took Possession of the Throne, than He was Graciously pleas'd to make a most favourable *Declaration* in behalf of the Members of the *Church of England*, promising to maintain that Church as it was by Law Establish'd : And this early Promise from a Prince, who was known to be always true to His Word, seem'd to elevate their drooping Spirits, and dissipate those dismal Clouds of fearful Apprehensions, which their ill jealousy was apt enough to conceive of a Prince of the *Roman Communion*. So that it might be rationally expected from a People so Prudent and Loyal as these of the *Church of England* would pass for in the World, to do something on their part, that might express a grateful acknowledgement ; which could be no less than the *Repeal* of the *Sanguinary Penal Laws*, and the late Impious *Tests* : The first being purposely Enacted to maintain the *Usurpation* of Queen *Eliz.* and the last being contriv'd designedly to Exclude the present King. But my *Loyal Gentlemen* have been hitherto so far out of the right Byass, that in lieu of taking off the *Tests* and *Penal Laws*, (which all People expected from them in point of Gratitude, and good Manners) they made a solemn *Address* to His Majesty, that none should be employ'd who were not capacitated by the said *Laws* and *Tests* to bear Offices Civil and Military. That is to say in short, *Your Majesty must have none either in your Army, or at Court about Your Person, but such as really believe, and will swear to it that You are an Idolater*. For that's the plain *English* of the *Test*. Now let me ask any indifferent Man, what security can a Prince have, who must keep none about Him, but such *Christians*, that are fully convinc'd in their own Judgement, that He is a *Pagan* ? If the same People made it Penal heretofore in the Reign of K. *Charles II.* to call the King a *Papist* or a *Heretick*, upon

upon a supposition that That *True Protestant Subject* could not be Faithful to the King, if He were suspected to be any way inclin'd to *Popery* or *Heresy*; what security can they now give, that the same *Protestants* will be true to a Prince who is a declared *Papist*, and an *Heathen* to boot, by a new *Article of Faith*, which is of greater force and value than the 39 that went before.

But (says the *Zealous Protestant* of the *Mother-Church*) If You *Repeal the Test*, You take away the Bull-mark that defends the Ch. for if that were once demolish'd, the *Enemy* would rush in, and possess all: And it is a delicate *Innocent Church*, that cannot be safe but in a *Fortify'd place*, I must confess it is a great Argument of her *Modesty*, to own her self weak and unable to subsist without the support of *Parliamentary Laws*; to *Hang, Draw and Quarter* her *Opposers*; and without a coercive Power too in her self to *Fine*, and *Excommunicate* all *Recusants*, and *Non-conformists*. *Prayer, Fasting, Mortification of the Flesh*, and other *Austerities*, are not, it seems, so proper means to remove the Fears and Jealousies of her tender *Conscience*; she must make use of more powerful Engines for her own security. The *Primitive Christians* flourish'd under *Persecution* for the space of 300 years; and the *Catholicks* of these Kingdoms, have been almost continually suffering these 150 years past: If this new *Protestant Church* be from God, why should they despair of the same *Providence*, without being guarded by so many *Acts of Parliament*? Where is the assurance that the *Apostolical Church* (as they call themselves) should have in the assistance of the *Holy Ghost*, who is to continue with the true Church till the consummation of the World? And what is now become of this celebrated *Loyalty* to the Temporal Prince, which no People could have in so eminent a degree as those of the Church of *England*? It is very remarkable that the *Roman Catholicks* constantly adher'd to King *Charles I.* when He disown'd and rejected them; and that the Church of *England Protestants* do not now trust King *James II.* when He gives them so many fresh assurances of His Royal Protection: Whereby the vast difference between the *Loyalty* of the one, and that of the other is clearly discern'd.

As for the *Tests* themselves, it is not my province to shew the Absurdities of them in point of *Doctrine*. For my business is, to set forth in its own Colours the extraordinary Loyalty of these Men, who obstinately maintain a *Test*, contriv'd by the the *Faction* to usher in the *Bill of Exclusion*: Though by the by, I must hold it a great folly, to say that *Transubstantiation* is not a probable Opinion at least, considering the Number and Learning of those who maintain it, which is the best part of *Christendom*: And if it be a probable opinion, it must be a great temerity in any Man to swear there is no such thing. And seeing the *Real Presence* of Christ's Body in the *Eucharist*, is confess'd by the most Eminent Divines of the *Reformation*, and by the greatest Prelates and most Famous Doctors of the Church of *England*, I should think that this new *Tenet*, which makes it *Idolatry* to adore the *Divine Body of Christ* (whether there be a *Transubstantiation* or not) must certainly favour more of a *Mahometan* than of *Christian* Doctrine. And it is much admir'd (even by some of her own Children,) that the Grave and Matron-like Church of *England*, which values her self so much for her Antiquity, should be over-fond of a new Point of Faith lately broach'd by a Famous *Act of an Infallible English Parliament* conven'd at *Westminster*, and guided by the Holy Spirit of *Shaftsbury*. But I doubt there are some *Parliaments* in the World, which will not so easily admit this new *Article* into their *Creed*: Tho' the Church of *England* labours so much to maintain it, as a special Evidence of her singular *Loyalty*.

So that upon the whole matter the *Loyal Church* of *England* must either change her old Principles of *Loyalty*, and take example by her *Catholic* Neighbours how to behave her self towards a Prince who is not of her Persuasion; or she must give His Majesty leave not to nourish a Snake in His own Bosom, but rather to withdraw His Royal Protection, which was promis'd upon the account of her constant Fidelity: For it is an approv'd Axiom in *Phylosophy*. *Cessante causa tollitur effectus*; and we have a common saying of our own, *no longer Pipe, no longer Dance*. And now let us leave the *Holy Mother Church* at liberty to consult what new Measures of *Loyalty* she ought to take for her own dear Interest, and for ought I know it may be worth her serious consideration.

F I N I S.



